DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 116 247 CS 501 186

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TITLE Excessive Loquacity: Women's Speech as Represented in American Etiquette Books.
PUB DATE Jul 75
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Assn. (Austin, Texas, July 10-12, 1975); Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Cultural Factors; *Females; Literary Analysis; Reference Books; *Sex Differences; *Sex Role; Sex Stereotypes; *Speech Habits; Speech Instruction
IDENTIFIERS *Etiquette Books

ABSTRACT

This paper examines etiquette books as repositories of cultural beliefs about the differing ways men and women should talk and the beliefs about the differing ways men and women actually talk. Etiquette books published in the past 150 years are examined to measure consistency or change in these beliefs, and the implications of the study for actual conversations between men and women are briefly discussed. Some of the conclusions reached by this study are that according to etiquette books women should not gossip but men can; men should not discuss politics in the company of women; women are advised to talk little but smile a lot; men are sometimes advised not to yell, but women at all times should be serene; while men are advised not to use too much slang, women should never use slang; and swearing or profanity should not be practiced by either sex but especially not by women or by men in the company of women. It is concluded that etiquette rules have changed little over the years and that these rules do have an impact on our speech behavior. (TS)

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EXCESSIVE LOQUACITY: WOMEN'S SPEECH AS REPRESENTED IN AMERICAN ETIQUETTE BOOKS

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Paper presented at the
Speech Communication Association Conference
Austin, Texas
July 10-12, 1975

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The concepts female and male have long served as important polarities in our culture. While people differ in the way they perceive the world, some perceptions, such as those concerning what constitutes female and male behavior, are shared by so many people that we can call them social stereotypes, or commonly held beliefs about classes of people. Stereotypical thoughts about men and women in Europe and America have changed very little in the past 150 years. One method of studying the stereotypes of females and males across a number of years is through literature. In The Fiction of Sex, Miles (1974) traces those stereotypes through the literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Instead of change she finds consistency; she writes that "both art and criticism continue to cling to the inherited constriction of nineteenth-century sexual definition, the rigid stereotypes of male and female!" (p. 35).

An important aspect of the stereotypes of classes of people is the speech their members are thought to use. Information about the descriptions and prescriptions of speech believed to belong to women and men can be found through a study of popular fiction. Berryman (1975), for example, has studied language of females and males as represented in fiction of the Ladies Home Journal at the beginning of the twentieth century in order to arrive at the authors' and editors' ideas about the differing ways women and men speak. Representations of folklinguistics found in cartoons and in proverbs also can provide much insight into the common beliefs about women's and men's speech.

Another source of descriptions and prescriptions of the talk of males and females is the etiquette book, which forthrightly claims to give advice on what are thought to be the wrongs and rights of our society, including bad and good speech. As such, etiquette books are intended to be common

codes of what proper behavior should be. They are to serve as bases for self training for those men and women who want to do and to say the correct thing. Here, we are interested in etiquette books as repositories of cultural beliefs about the (differing) ways men and women should talk. And beliefs about the (differing) ways men and women actually talk.

This paper will trace the beliefs about the differences through a study of etiquette books published, primarily, in the past 150 years to measure consistency or change in the beliefs about desirable and undesirable speech differences between the sexes; and then the implications of the study for actual conversations between men and women will be briefly discussed.

There is, of course, much overlap of advice to males and females in etiquette books. For example, most books advise readers, males and females, of the desirability of being considerate of others, males and females. In this paper, however, the focus will be on the differential advice given to males and to females about their speech. Since more restrictions are directed to females, most of the paper will deal with female speech. As Aresty (1970) in reviewing centuries of etiquette books writes, "The usual deference paid to women in American etiquette books was abandoned when the subject turned to conversation" (p. 234).

One of the most repeated concerns about women's speech is their supposed propensity to gossip. The editors of Esquire's Guide to Modern Etiquette (1969) write that perhaps gossiping is forgivable in women since it is part of their nature, but a man cannot gossip and remain a "man":

> Not all cats are female, but it sometimes seems that the female of the species gets all the cream. When a woman carries tales or talks behind another's back, she has the common view of her nature on her side. She is forgivable, if not lovable. But when a man gossips he courts a double penalty; he throws suspicion on his manhood as well as on his manners. Unless you would be known as an 'old woman,' let the people involved report their own news. (p. 87)

Gossip is bad for everyone, but worse for men. The Gentleman's Book of Etiquette, and Manual of Politeness (1875) advises: "Avoid gossip; in a woman it is detestable, but in a man it is utterly despicable" (Hartley, p. 27).

In 1864 readers of The Art of Conversation were warned about women "of a certain grade of vulgarity" who try to "tease" others into gossip by asking leading questions. Perhaps only women can be labelled gossipers. Whereas the advice to young men in Manners and Customs of Today (1890) is that "[the gentleman] does not refer to any scandals or ugly rumors that may be current" (Maxwell, p. 389), young women are advised "Never tattle or gossip" (p. 346). In She-Manners (1959) a section titled "Gossip Not" warns that while gossiping may be titillating, it is not conversation but malice. The companion book He-Manners (1954) has no parallel section, although it suggests that men should not make derogatory remarks or questionable jokes about others. Here seems an instance where behavior by women is given one label while similar behavior by men is called something else. Perhaps men are not considered gossipers because when they gossip it is called something different, such as questionable joking.

In a book about how to grow up gracefully, readers are advised to watch out for the gossiper, because "such a girl is like a little running brook. She bubbles and gurgles and runs right on. You can see clear through her shallow water" (Woodward, 1935, p. 188). Books by Kleiser (1932) and by Valentine and Thompson (1938) both state that it is primarily a feminine fault to expose friends to ridicule. Courtesy Book (Gardner & Farren, 1937) calls this fault Dame Gossip (p. 53).

Women, then, are thought more likely to deserve the title of gossip, a "despicable label" (Gardner & Farren). They should fight against their

nature and learn not to talk malaciously of others. What, instead, should their topics of conversation be? The advice over the past 150 years is clear. They should learn about the topics of conversation of men, realizing that they will never have complete control of those topics which will always be men's topics. An etiquette book for university students which went through three editions (1948, 1956, 1962) tells of the success story of a mother who was able to learn about her sons' topic of conversation, baseball. The account also serves as a warning to college women who don't try: "Her sons enjoyed taking her to the games and often their disinterested [sic] dates were left at home. The mother had learned to talk their language" (Pierson, p. 36). Peg Bracken's etiquette book points out that while women get mad when men gather together at a party to talk, "many a woman asks for it, with her crossfire chitchat about purely female concerns, which drives the men perforce into the tall timber where the bottle is" (1964, p. 119).

In the mid-eighteenth century Lord Chesterfield in writing to his son indicated the limited topics he thought women could handle while talking to men. The etiquette books in the next 200 years have not greatly enlarged those parameters. He wrote:

> A man of sense only trifles with [women], plays with them, humors and flatters them, as he does with a sprightly forward child; but he neither consults them about, nor trusts them with serious matters; though he often makes them believe that he does both. (edited 1925, p. 107)

Later, in summary, Chesterfield wrote:

> Your chit-chat or <u>entregent</u> with them neither can, nor ought to be very solid; but you should take care to turn and dress up your trifles prettily, and make them every now and then convey indirectly some little piece of flattery. A fan, a riband, or a head-dress are great materials for gallant dissertations. (p. 288)

More than 100 years later women were being warned that professional men "when with ladies, generally wish for miscellaneous subjects of conversation, and, as their visits are for recreation, they will feel excessively annoyed if obliged to 'talk shop'" (Hartley, 1872, p. 15). However, if men do talk about their everyday employment, women are told to "listen politely, and show your interest. You will probably gain useful information in such conversation" (p. 16). In 1875 gentlemen were told that while "a lady of sense will feel more complimented if you converse with her upon instructive, high subjects, than if you address to her only the language of compliment," yet politics should be avoided "in the society of ladies" (Hartley, p. 27, 11). The etiquette books seem to set up an unnecessary contradiction. No one is to discuss politics in the company of women so they will know little about politics. So do not mention politics in the company of women. The author of the 1895 A Manuel of Etiquette . . . complains that many ladies can only talk animatedly "concerning the silly, sensational, frothy novels of the day, and also upon the fashions as they rise and fall" (Johnson, pp. 96-97). Women--who are restricted in their formal education, their occupations, and their conversations with men--are taken to task for their limited knowledge. Those men who would belong to the Best American Society in 1892 were warned: "in talking with ladies of ordinary education, avoid political, scientific or commercial topics" (Wells, p. 65). "If you wish your conversation to be thoroughly agreeable, lead a mother to talk of her children, a young lady of her last ball, an author of his forthcoming book, or an artist of his exhibition picture" (p. 66). The assumption is that while men will be able to converse with women and men holding different interests and occupations, the women will not.

Gentlemen "who desire to become educated and polished in general society" were even cautioned in 1878 to avoid the different topics and styles of women's songs: "A man should not sing women's ditties, and should never yawl out the namby-pamby ballads beloved of young ladies." (Aster, p. 243).

More recently, in 1940 Lady Lore states that while mutual interests are hard for boys and girls to find, "a safe subject is always the boy himself" (Witan, pp. 25 24). The same year the author of Cues for You writes that "Women usually like to talk about clothes and their home, whereas men like to be admired for their deeds" (Ryan, p. 235). The problem of conversation between the sexes is made difficult because when girls are together they "chatter endlessly about clothes and dates," while boys together "discuss" sports (Hertz, 1950, p. 30).

Emily Post has written how the "perfect secretary" can handle this difficulty of what topics to discuss with the employer:

> The perfect secretary should forget that she is a human being, and be the most completely efficient aid at all times and on all subjects. Her object is to coordinate with her employer's endeavor, and not make any intrusions which would be more likely to affect him as hurdles than as helps.
>
> She should respond to his requirements exactly as a machine responds to the touch of lever or accelerator. If he says 'Good morning,' she answers 'Good morning' with a smile and cheerfully. She does not volunteer a remark--unless she has messages of importance to give him. If he says nothing, she says nothing, and she does not even mentally notice that he has said nothing. (1945, p. 548)

If the etiquette books are to be believed, that secretary will have a difficult time keeping herself from talking. The editors of Vogue's Book of Etiquette and Good Manners (1969) write that "the over-talkative women is one of the classic threats to her fellow travelers" (p. 156). Amy Vanderbilt (1958) writes that the "chatterbox is usually feminine (p. 294).

The author of a book designed to improve the conversation of men and women writes that women are particularly prone to "sustain conversation" (Carroll, 1939, p. 137). In Advice to Young Men, and (incidentally) to Young Women in the Middle and Higher Ranks of Life (1829), the author makes clear that when he cautions men against women with lazy tongues he is referring to pronunciation: "By laziness of the tongue I do not mean silence; I do not mean an absence of talk, for that is, in most cases, very good" in a wife (n.p.).

In 1831 young women were told that "many are of the opinion that a very young woman can hardly be too silent and reserved in company. . . . a respectful and earnest attention is the most delicate kind of praise, and never fails to gratify and please" (Letters on the Improvement . . ., pp. 110-111). In 1892 the advice was "One does not wish to hear a lady talk politics nor a smattering of silence; but she should be able to understand and listen with interest when politics are discussed, and to appreciate, in some degree, the conversation of scientific men." Further, "ladies should avoid talking too much; it will occasion remarks" (Wells, pp. 70, 120). In 1935 the sub-deb editor of the Ladies' Home Journal in her etiquette book warned girls that "there's nothing much worse than an empty head and a clacking tongue" (Woodward, p. 183). There are many times to keep quiet, she writes "When a really serious discussion of life, love or the correct way to plant celery is launched, keep that great brain of yours to yourself" (p. 189).

While most of the beliefs about women's speech are found to have a long history, the twentieth century etiquette books seldom discuss what was, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, claimed to be the value, if

limited, of women's conversation to men. Lord Chesterfield wrote: "The company of women of fashion will improve your manners, though not your understanding; and that complaisance and politeness, which are so useful in men's company, can only be acquired in women's" (edited 1925; p. 40). The author of the 1864 Art of Conversation writes that the women who can help the great men develop their genius have not lived in vain (pp. 106-107). But today it is no longer assumed that women can improve men in important ways.

Rather, increasingly, women are advised to talk little, but smile a lot. Lane (1922) writes that a woman can express "the charm of personality" without talking. "You can make your eyes, your smile speak for you and say more, perhaps, than words could express" (p. 61). In 1935 the advice to girls was not to be completely silent, unless they had an overwhelming influence on boys. Usually, a girl would have to "open up that rosebud mouth" (Woodward, p. 179). Further she was not to be "thoroughly stupid" (p. 181). But the chapter on what to talk about concluded that if the subject of conversation is weighty girls should keep quiet:

> You're a nice intelligent girl--just a shade less intelligent than he himself is. Men don't look for dazzling brilliance and great wit in a girl. They prefer one who smiles and smiles and says an inspiring yes and no and a marvelling 'did you really?' (p. 189)

In Lady Lore (1940) the advice was to "have a good smile stored up" to start an evening with a man (p. 13). and to remember that "the chatterbox leaves the impression that she is totally without brains" (Witan, p. 23). Campus Cues in 1960 indicates how the smile can help cover an embarrassing situation. In advising the woman student who, on a date, has trouble finding the sleeve of her coat while a man is holding it, the author writes:

> Just keep trying to get into it and don't get embarrassed about it. Be patient. Smile and make some remark, such as, 'I seem to be having trouble getting into my own coat.' (Pearson, p. 111)

An etiquette book in 1836 states that the smile should come naturally from kind, social feelings and "it must be followed by the repose of the risible muscles; and these alternations should pass over the countenance, like the lights and shadows on a field of waving grain in summer" (Farrar, p. 292). In fact, women should keep all of their speech and their gestures under control. An 1831 book states that passion is "so odious in itself, especially in the female character, that, one would think, shame alone would be sufficient to preserve a young woman from giving way to it" (Letters on the Improvement . . ., pp. 80-81). The author adds that "an enraged woman is one of the most disgusting sights in nature" (p. 81). A lady should never gesticulate when conversing; hands should "rest in an easy, natural position, perfectly quiet" (Hartley, 1872, p. 151). The Habits of Good Society dictates that "control over the countenance is a part of manners. As a lady enters a drawing-room, she should look for the mistresses of the house. . . . Her face should wear a smile" (p. 309). Maxwell in 1890 writes that "Ladies should observe a dignified reserve under all circumstances" (p. 346). She should not "show petulance or ill-temper, if anything goes wrong" (p. 347). While men are cautioned in some books not to yell when they are angry, women are to exercise more control; they are to be always serene. By 1907 "A moment of enthusiasm, a burst of feeling, a flash of eloquence may be allowed [the woman], but the intercourse of society, either in conversation or in letters, allows no more" (Lucas, p. 394). Kleiser (1932) writes that boys "have always had abundant animal spirits, and these have been expected to lead at times to mischief and misconduct" (p. 138).

In fact, too good a boy is not wanted. Girls are to be more demure, he writes. But something is happening to our society, he thinks. Although girls are brought up to be "prim and neat in attire, conduct, and conversation . . . it is the young girls of today who display the most distressing freedom of speech" (pp. 138-139). Doubtless this problem can be traced, he writes, to the feminist movement (p. 140).

The control or reserve that a woman either has naturally or should strive for extends over her entire body when she is conversing with others. Vogue's Book of Etiquette and Good Manners (1969) states that women wearing slacks should "never sit the way many men do--asprawl, or with knees spread wide, or with one ankle up on the other knee. Actually, even crossed knees are considered informal" (p. 6). (The women who conducted a study of sex stereotyping in children's readers [Dick and Jane as Victims, 1972] found that even very young girls are portrayed as showing more reserve in their actions. While boys are shown engaged in athletics, girls are usually shown quietly watching with hands clasped behind back or in lap. While many studies of the activity level of young boys and girls find boys more active than girls, many studies show no differences. And some of the differences found might be dependent upon what is expected. One study [Loo and Wenar, 1971] found that while teachers rated boys as more active than girls, actometers which recorded the gross motor movements of the children did not show boys as more active. And one wonders why, if girls and women are naturally so much more reserved, the etiquette books need to caution them about controlling emotions and their gestures.)

This reserve that women are to show extends, of course, to the types of exclamations they are restricted to. One nineteenth century etiquette

book told women to avoid all exclamations as they are in bad taste and are likely to be vulgar words. The same source states that "A lady may express as much polite surprise or concern by a few simple, earnest words, or in her manner, as she can by exclaiming 'Good gracious!' or 'Mercy!' or 'Dear me!'" (Hartley, p. 151). Slang is also vulgar and while men are cautioned against using too much of it, women are to avoid it entirely. Leland (1864) writes that women frequently use slang phrases with an apologetic smile. "But," he writes, "to modify a fault is not to remove it. Resolve that you will never use an incorrect, an inelegant, or a vulgar phrase or word, in any society whatever" (p. 138). All slang is vulgar, writes Wells (1890) in his book on the manners of the best American society. "It has become of late unfortunately prevalent, and we have known even ladies pride themselves on the saucy chique with which they adopt certain cant phrases of the day. Such habits cannot be too severely reprehended" (p. 67). Maxwell (1890) also writes that a woman should not use slang. She explains how it happens that some do: "Young men pick up the slang of the comic opera or theatre, and some young women thoughtlessly imitate them" (pp. 345-346). Kleiser in 1932 writes that the woman who adopts such expressions as "I don't give a hoot," "Oh, boy!" and "Good night!"--that is, the young woman who is vulgar in speech--is likely to "slip into commonness in other respects" for, he warns, a lapse in one area is likely to lead to misconduct in others (p. 149).

Swearing or profanity should not be practiced by either men or women, but especially not by women or men in the company of women. Hartley (1875) states: "Need I say that no gentleman will ever soil his mouth with an oath. Above all, to swear in a drawing-room or before ladies is not only

indelicate and vulgar in the extreme, but evinces a shocking ignorance of the rules of polite society and good breeding" (p. 23). Mrs. Jane Aster (1878) writes that women are sometimes guilty of demi-swearing: "The young lady [who] would cut you--properly enough--for using an oath, will nevertheless cry 'bother' when her boot-lace breaks, or what not" (p. 58). The executive director of the Girl Scouts of the United States in her book Your Best Foot Forward (1940, 1955) writes that young men and certainly all young women should know that the use of profanity or obscene language is ill-bred and undignified, "even where only men are present" (pp. 132-133).

The use of sentences which have a double meaning or which make allusions to things ladies should know nothing about has been considered to be in very poor taste. Hartley 1872 and Wells 1892 write that if a lady should talk to someone who uses such phrases, she should pretend not to understand. An 1829 book was more explicit in its advice to the female who would be a wife. She should appear not to understand any indelicate allusion; in fact, she should appear "to receive from it no more impression than if she were a post" (Advice to Young Men. . . n.p.)

While many of the characteristics of women's speech supposedly come almost naturally to women, if they are proper women there is one natural characteristic common to many women which say the writers of the etiquette books, is an irritant: the high pitched voice. The editors of Vogue's Book of Etiquette and Good Manners (1969) write that the following lines by Shakespeare describe the ideal feminine speaking voice: "Her voice was very soft, gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman" (p. 15). In thus describing the ideal voice for women, the editors are following tradition. The same Shakespeare lines are found in etiquette books published in 1937, 1895, and 1892. Books in 1969 (Post), 1937 (Gardner & Farren) and 1892 (Wells)

all caution that you can tell a lady by her voice; it will be low in pitch. Girls who do not have the tongues of angels (rich, warm, low-pitched voices) should change their voice so that people no longer shudder at the sounds (Woodward, 1935). The book Better Than Beauty (1938) suggests that while a shrill voice may make a seemingly attractive woman very unattractive, practice will likely help her correct it. A woman with a high-pitched voice should practice until she can pitch her voice "so low that it seems to come out of [her] shoes" (Valentine & Thompson, p. 92). Her voice and laugh should be low--and quiet, too (Witan, 1940, p. 26). (The books assume, then, that high-pitched voices are considered unacceptable to everyone, and the low voice much more desirable. However, a recent study of the perceptions of men and women of male and female speech indicated that men think the low voice more ideal, more desirable than do women [Kramer, 1975]).

In addition to keeping her pitch low, the woman should keep her voice soft, and she should enunciate clearly. In 1829 the advice was:

> Nothing is much more disgusting than what the sensible country people call a maw-mouthed woman. A maw-mouthed man is bad enough: he is sure to be a lazy fellow: but, a woman of this description, in addition to her laziness, soon becomes the most disgusting of mates. In this whole world nothing is much more hateful than a female's under jaw, lazily moving up and down, and letting out a long string of half-articulate sounds. (Advice to Young Men . . ., n.p.)

In writing about the bad habit of slurring words Kleiser (1932) writes that "the very same [bad] enunciation would. . . seem worse coming from feminine than from masculine lips. We naturally look for primness and correctness in girls. That is one reason why poor speech in them is particularly distressing" (p. 151). There is no disagreement in the books on the pitch and the tone that a woman's voice should have. In 1975 Baker writes that "A woman should have a soft, feminine-sounding voice. Your voice should be as gentle as a caress when you speak" (p. 135).

Such qualities rule out over-emphasizing or italizing words. Maxwell (1890) quotes a lady who said of the conversation of women in society that "it resembles the straw used in packing china; it is nothing, yet without it everything would be broken" (p. 360). Yet some young ladies have not attained this level of speech which helps keep men "in the path of duty" (pp. 360-361). Some use too many adjectives and too much exaggeration, as in such expressions as "I am ever so much obliged" and "Wasn't it perfectly awful?" Maxwell writes: "Now girls, let me say to you that you make a great mistake. . . . you know better and can do better, for I have heard you talk sense, but these careless, exaggerated sentences and sounds grow upon you, and you finally lose a respectable standard of expression" (p. 361).

Undue intensity over trifles is a mistake that Kleiser (1932) say that "some people--notably women, but also some clerics, teachers, and literary or artistic people--make." (The categories are evidently exclusive: women, and artistic people.) These persons are likely to use such phrases as "And are you really feeling perfectly well?" (p. 73). Almost 100 years before, Farrar (1836) voiced a similar complaint: "Some girls, without any wish to exaggerate, contract a habit of using certain forcible expressions on all occasions, great and small, and consequently make some very absurd speeches" (p. 379).

Some writers would say that one reason women have difficulty in talking appropriately in moderate tones about suitable topics is their propensity to think illogically. Lord Chesterfield wrote his son:

> Women, then, are only children of a larger growth; they have an entertaining tattle, and sometimes wit; but for solid reasoning, good sense, I never knew in my life one that had it, or who reasoned or acted consequentially for four-and-twenty hours together. (edited 1925, p. 107)

Robert Louis Stevenson wrote that women can think rationally about some topics:

> About any point of business or conduct, any actual affair demanding settlement, a woman will speak and listen, hear and answer arguments, not only with natural wisdom, but with candour and logical honesty. But if the subject of debate be something in the air, an abstraction. . . then may the male debater instantly abandon hope; he may employ reason, adduce facts, be supple, be smiling, be angry, all shall avail him nothing; what the woman said first, that (unless she has forgotten it) she will repeat at the end. (Krans, 1910, p. 364)

The author of the 1936 The Art of Conversation writes that women can think faster than men but are inclined to flit while "by nature man tries to be a reasoning, logical creature" (Wright, p. 99). The same author cites as corraboration the words of Andre Maurois:

> Women's thoughts obey the same laws as do the molecules of gases. They go with much rapidity in an initial direction, until a shock sends them into another, then a second shock into a third direction. It is useless to choose a theme with women. (Wright, p. 99)

In all, women are not as logical as men; they are not knowledgeable about serious matters of life; and all too often they speak too much, in high voices, on silly topics, with outbursts of emotional exaggeration. They can become more knowledgeable about important topics if they will but listen quietly to men. Most of their other problems can be solved if they realize that it is their duty to be as agreeable, and as subordinate, to men as possible.

"Some women intuitively comprehend their mission, and recognize that its chief duty is to be agreeable to all, and to elicit from each a display of his best qualities" (The Art of . . ., 1864, pp. 105-106). Put another way, women's "very mission is to make life less burdensome to man, to soothe and comfort him, to raise him from his petty cares to happier thoughts, to

purer imaginings, toward heaven itself" (Aster, 1878, p. 211). In 1975 not all women are aware of this duty, this mission. Baker writes:

> Today, men are dumfounded by the brash out-spokenness of some women in the public eye. . . . they don't even fight back. The women take advantage of this respect inherent in men to get what they want. Our poor men don't have a chance. (1975, pp. 10-11)

She advises such women to reconsider their actions and become understanding, loving women once more. One of her rules for improving conversation between the sexes involves the women listening, with her heart, to what the man says: "Respond enthusiastically and sincerely. Even repeat back a small part of what he said so he knows you are really listening" (p. 55). She advises wives to study their husband's interests and start catering to them, and she further advises wives to fight boredom by such things as improving their voices, if they are not gentle enough; the husbands will be thankful (pp. 131-135).

The same advice, to be kind and gentle and subordinate, runs through the etiquette books through the years. Modesty is deemed attractive in man, but more so in women (Krans, 1910, p. 86). Fenwick in Vogue's Book on Etiquette (1948) declares that "a very common example of bad manners is that of the wife who says 'I' or 'my' instead of 'we' or 'our'" (p. 34). For "a woman can gracefully play second fiddle, but a man who is obviously subordinated to a dominating woman is a pathetic and foolish figure" (p. 34). Wright (1936) is also explicit about the speaking relationship that should exist between a man and a woman:

> A man likes to talk about himself or about his business or his hobbies. He likes to brag. He likes to express his opinions. He likes to tell how good he is.
>
> For all of this he needs an audience. To be that audience is the function of the woman. (p. 104)

Wright adds that women should also be allowed an audience for their opinions; in fact, the men will find the contrast of the women's speech with the "more lordly, more stolid" male speech to be refreshing. But not all writers think women should assert opinions bluntly. The Ladies' Book of Etiquette (1860, 1872) advises that a lady should say "I think this is so" or "These are my views." (These qualifying remarks, when they are used in woman's speech as it is represented in cartoons, are thought to make women seem less intelligent than men [Kramer 1974].) In Personality Preferred (1935) a girl is advised to "pop a bright remark" at her male partner to dazzle him "with its insantity, its gaiety, its wit" (p. 180). In fact, girls are told that they don't have to always agree with boys; rather, they can come out with "some wild theory." But this advice is more lenient than most. In She-Manners women are told to build the man a dais, because, "you know--men suffer from an odd sense of inferiority. They're often terrified by smart women" (Loeb, 1959, p. 123). Best let him feel that he is the superior one" (Loeb, p. 123). In The New Etiquette (1947) the directibe is explicit: "Once during an evening is enough for a woman to state a definite and unqualified opinion--and even then it should be some - thing constructive or a defense of some one or something" (Wilson, p. 206).

The focus of this paper has been on women and their speech and the manner in which their speech does differ or should differ from men's. Women have been cautioned about their speech more than men in the American etiquette books. Such books have often, however, warned men that civil behavior includes civil speech. They must be especially careful when speaking to women. Lord Chesterfield wrote that "Civility is particularly due to all women. . . . It is due to their sex, and is the only protection they have against the superior strength of ours." One hundred forty years later

Wells in his book on the best American manners repeated (without attribution) Lord Chesterfield's words (p. 286). The authors of twentieth century etiquette books give similar advice to men. Wright (1936) writes, "Women like to be courted. This attention is a delicate tribute to their womanliness" (p. 106). Fenwick (1948) writes "The whole relation of men to women, as far as etiquette is concerned, is based on the assumption that woman is a delicate, sensitive creature, easily tired, who must be feted, amused, and protected (p. 28). In 1969, Esquire's Guide to Modern Etiquette states that "Knighthood may be in seed, but every man is still a self-appointed protector of every woman's frailest possession--her 'good name'" (p. 83). In general, the etiquette books tell men to be considerate of all others, but protective of women. (Except, as noted previously, many etiquette books warn men that while being considerate of women they must also protect themselves against women's volubility.)

The etiquette books state that women do not and should not talk like men. Mention has already been made of some of the reasons why this dichotomy must, the writers think, exist. Woman's mission is to comfort man; woman is weak and must be protected from and by men. There are additional differences which are thought to be innate and which will alter the speech habits of women and men. Farrar in 1836 wrote, "Women are happily endowed with a quick sense of propriety, and a natural modesty, which will generally guide them aright in their intercourse with the other sex" (1936, p. 290). The author of The Habits of Good Society (1861), in writing that women alter their speech when talking to men, states that it is natural for women to be unnatural in these circumstances (p. 276). According to Wells (1892),

> Women observe all the delicacies of propriety in manners, and all the shades of impropriety, much better than men; not only because they attend to them earlier and longer, but because their perceptions are more refined than those of the other sex, who are habitually employed about greater things. Women divine, rather than arrive at proper conclusions. (p. 34)

Wells writes further that while everyone should be reserved in speech, women in particular should be careful, for women "are like moss-roses, and are most beautiful in spirit and in intellect, when they are but half-unfolded" (p. 77).

One of the faults general to all classes of women, according to Ordway (1913), is interrupting conversation "repeatedly and ruthlessly" (p. 17). We "naturally" expect correctness from women (Kleiser, 1932, p. 151). Wright (1936) states that the conversation of women is distinct from men in a number of ways, primarily because their thought processes are different. Women are better conversationalists because they think faster; they flit from one topic to another. "Women," he writes, "are intuitive rather than analytical" (p. 99). Men are naturally more logical. If "by some strange freak of nature" a woman should shine at activities which take a logical mind, "it will be found that she has a man's mind" (p. 99). Women talk about people in particular; men about people in general. Men have a better sense of humor, and they are less observant than women (Wright, 1936, p. 101). Women, then he thinks, just do not talk like men. These sex differences will be in the background of all mixed-sex conversations and will cause either attraction or antagonism (Wright, p. 103).

In the etiquette books studied, most of the maxims of speech conduct which would distinguish between the speech behavior of men and women seem designed to maintain or strengthen the culture's division between males and females. It could be argued that people's behavior does not actually conform to the percepts set forth by the etiquette books. But the rules in etiquette books are <u>based</u> on what the culture thinks is or should be the proper behavior of men and women. The material presented in this paper indicated that these rules change little over the years. And these rules have an impact on our speech behavior even if we are not heavy readers of etiquette books. Evidence that our expectations about how males and females

should and/or do act will influence our interactions, particularly initial interactions, comes from Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) and from Leik (1972). The rules presented in the etiquette books are reflections of our social stereotypes of proper men and women, our culture's beliefs about the characteristics linked to men and women. They serve as a base for action in unfamiliar situations. The etiquette rules concerning the speech of men and women, then, are important to women and men interested in studying sex-based differences in language.

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I thank Elaine LeTarte for helping me locate these sources.